

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5369

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS ROME 10036

FODAG

GENEVA FOR USEL FRANK

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: FAO, OCON

SUBJECT: FAO 71ST COUNCIL - CONCLUDING SESSION

SUMMARY: FAO 71ST COUNCIL CLOSED RAPIDLY IN MORNING OF JUNE 17 WITH COUNCIL ADOPTING DRAFTING COMMITTEE'S REPORT WITH HARDLY A CHANGE. FAO DIRECTOR GENERAL MADE A SHORT CONCLUDING SPEECH WHICH EXPRESSED HIS PLEASURE THAT 71ST COUNCIL HAD GIVEN SUCH STRONG SUPPORT TO HIS BUDGET AND PROGRAMS, AND APPEALED TO MEMBERS TO RETURN TO ROME IN THE FALL IN POSITIVE SPIRIT SO CONSENSUS COULD BE REACHED. ALSO IN CLOSING DAYS MAJORITY APPROVED NEW FAO RESERVE ACCOUNT. END SUMMARY.

1. AT EARLY CLOSE OF 71ST FA COUNCIL DUE TO RAPID APPROVAL OF INTENSELY NEGOTIATED REPORT OF DRAFTING COMMITTEE, FAO DIRECTOR GENERAL SAOUMA MADE A CLISING STATEMENT EXPRESSING PLEASURE THAT COUNCIL HAD GIVEN STRONG SUPPORT TO HIS PROGRAM AND BUDGET. HE THEN POINTED OUT A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT ITEMS HAD BEEN DEFERRED -- TRANSFER OF THE SUSPENSE ACCOUNT TO A NEW SPECIAL FUND FOR AN ACTION PROGRAM AGAINST POST-HARVEST LOSSES. HE ASKED MEMBERS

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TO CONSIDER THESE ITEMS BEFORE THE KEY FALL MEETINGS, 72ND COUNCIL AND 19TH CONFERENCE SESSIONS, AND EMPHASIZED THAT TECHNICAL FINANCIAL PROCEDURES SHOULD NOT TIE DOWN EQUITABLE PROPOSALS.

2. SAOUMA WENT ON TO STRESS THAT MINORITY POSITIONS ARE HONORED IN FAO, AND HE DOESN'T BELIEVE IN THEM BEING STEAMROLLED BY MAJORITY VIEWS. HE PREFERS TO ACT IN UNANIMITY OR AT LEAST BY

CONSENSUS. TO HAVE CONSENSUS THIS FALL COUNTRIES WILL HAVE TO ALTER THEIR POSITIONS TO CONFORM TO EQUITY AND HE HOPED ALL WOULD RETURN WITH POSITIVE POSITIONS.

3. FINALLY, MOVING FROM DIVISIVE FINANCIAL ISSUES WHICH SAOUMA RECOGNIZED DIVIDED THE FA DELEGATIONS, HE MENTIONED THE NEED FOR ALL MEMBERS TO CONSIDER THE ISSUES COMING UP IN ECOSOC AND THE UNGA AND TO RECOGNIZE THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES' USEFUL ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

4. IN CASE WE DIDN'T REEALIZE IT ALREADY, EDWARD WEST INFORMED THE DELEGATION THAT SOUMA'S CONCLUDING STATEMENT WAS AIMED ESPECIALLY AT THE U.S.

5. AT THE END OF THE 71ST COUNCIL, DELEGATIONS CONSIDERED THE CREATION OF A NEW RESERVE ACCOUNT AND FUNDING IT WITH \$5 MILLION FROM THE SPECIAL EXCHANGE RATE SUSPENSE ACCOUNT CREATED TWO YEARS' AGO WHICH HAS A NICE BALANCE. THE U.S. AND SEVEN OTHER COUNTRIES OPPOSED THE DRAFT RESOLUTION AS BEING TOO GENERAL AND OPEN-ENDED. HOWEVER, SINCE NINE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SPOKE IN FAVOR OF THE RESOLUTION, BEGIN QUOTE THE COUNCIL ACCODINGLY DECIDED TO TRANSMIT TO THE CONFERENCE THE DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR FINAL CONSIDERATION AND DECISION END QUOTE. GARDNER

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